



ACTION ALERT TELL TRI-STATE TO PRIORITIZE CLEAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Tri-State Generation & Transmission is Wyoming's second largest utility. It serves customers through High Plains Power, Big Horn Rural Electric Company, Garland Light & Power Company, Wheatland Rural Electric Association, Niobrara Electric Association, Carbon Power & Light, Wyrulec Company, and High West Energy. In total, Tri-state serves approximately 1.5 million customers in 4 western states.

Because Tri-state is a rural electric cooperative, when it increases its rates, the company does not need to obtain approval by state regulators. Thus, to date, no one has been able to hold Tri-state accountable for its decisions to build expensive power plants or otherwise raise rates. However, in November, Tri-State will submit a long-range resource plan to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC). This presents the best opportunity Tri-State customers have ever had to tell their utility what they think of their service today and what the company should invest in for tomorrow. Tri-State is seeking comments on the plan and all of those comments will be attached to the final report given to the PUC.

It is important for Tri-State customers and other interested people to comment on the plan. **Comments should be submitted via email to resourceplanning@tristategt.org Comments are due Monday, October 18.**

The draft plan and other pieces of information are available at <http://www.tristategt.org/ResourcePlanning/ResourcePlanDoc.cfm> The plan is quite lengthy, but if you do not have time to read through it, here are some suggested comments:

- Encourage Tri-State to invest in renewable energy. Renewable energy is cost-effective and does not need a long pre-planning time or face economic uncertainties like other generation sources. It is a smart choice for customers. Local renewable energy development within Tri-State's service territory also will have the added benefit of bringing significant financial opportunities to Tri-State customers.
- Thank Tri-State for doubling its budget allocated to demand-side management and energy efficiency improvements. Energy efficiency allows customers and the utility to save money and reduce energy demand, which creates significant environmental benefits. Tri-State should prioritize investment in demand-side management to stabilize energy demand growth. Tri-State should take the lead in working with its member cooperatives to drive innovation in efficiency.
- Caution Tri-State about significantly investing in natural gas generation facilities. Tri-State is exploring natural gas as an option to reduce the carbon risk from its coal plant fleet. However, Tri-State does not have any contracts with natural gas companies and any natural gas plant would require costly investments in pipelines and other infrastructure. Tell Tri-State they must examine the full life cycle of natural gas exploration and production, including the impacts to water, air and public health, when determining how natural gas will become part of their energy portfolio. Tri-State must investigate and identify the carbon footprint of natural gas from the wellhead to the end user before concluding it will be cleaner, safer and less expensive for customers.
- Ensure Tri-State factors in upcoming costs from the Laramie River Station near Wheatland and other coal plants. These old plants will need major expensive upgrades to bring them into compliance with current environmental regulations. The cost of these upgrades will be passed on to customers, so Tri-State should plan ahead and make sure the long-term cost of the plants is worth it.
- Tell Tri-State to drop out of the proposed Holcomb coal plant project. Tri-State's resource plan provides no tangible reason for the cooperative to continue holding on to its majority share of the proposed 895-megawatt Holcomb coal-burning power plant in Kansas. Tri-State would own more than 75 percent of the project, yet none of the 24 scenarios Tri-State used in its planning and forecasting shows any need for power from the Holcomb project.

If you would like our assistance in preparing comments, or if you have other questions, please contact Shannon at sanderson@powderriverbasin.org or 307-672-5809.

Thank you for your action and support. For more information on Powder River Basin Resource Council, or to give a donation to support our work on behalf of Wyoming communities, please visit <http://www.powderriverbasin.org>